Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

broadcasting a discovery request to network devices;

estimating a number of network devices from [[the]] responses received from the network devices;

dividing target devices into subsets of target devices, wherein a subset to which a particular device belongs is determined based on an identifier of the device and a number of subsets to which the target devices are divided;

sending a second request;

limiting subsets of target devices responsive to the second request, in part based on the second request including the number of subsets to which the target devices are divided and a subset index value; and

varying a timing with which the second request is communicated to the subsets of target devices.

2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein determining the subset of target devices comprises:

broadcasting over a network;

receiving one or more responses to the network broadcast from target devices

coupled to the network;

estimating a number of devices coupled to the network; and

determining a number of subgroups based, at least in part, on the estimated number of devices coupled to the network.

3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim I wherein determining the subset of target devices comprises:

multicasting to a subset of a network;

receiving one or more responses from target devices of the subnet;

estimating a number of devices in the subnet; and

determining a number of subgroups based, at least in part, on the estimated number of devices in the subnet.

4. (Currently Amended) An article comprising a machine-accessible

medium to provide machine-readable instructions that, when executed, cause one or more electronic system to:

broadcast a discovery request to network devices;

estimate a number of network devices from [[the]] responses received from the network devices;

divide [[the]] target devices into subsets of target devices, wherein a subset to which a particular device belongs is determined based on an identifier of the device and a number of subsets to which the target devices are divided;

send a second request;

limit subsets of target devices responsive to the second request, in part based on the second request including the number of subsets to which the target devices are divided and a subset index value; and

vary a timing with which the second request is communicated to the subsets of target devices.

5. (Previously Presented) The article of claim 4 wherein the instructions that cause the one or more electronic systems to determine the subset of target devices further comprises sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the one or more electronic systems to:

broadcast over a network;

receive one or more responses from target devices coupled to the network;

estimate a number of devices coupled to the network; and

determine a number of subgroups based, at least in part, on the estimated number of devices coupled to the network.

6. (Previously Presented) The article of claim 4 wherein the instructions that cause the one or more electronic systems to determine the subset of target devices further comprises sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the one or more electronic systems to:

multicast to a subset of a network;

receive one or more responses from target devices of the subnet;

estimate a number of devices in the subnet; and

determine a number of subgroups based, at least in part, on the estimated number of devices in the subnet.

7. (Currently Amended) ~~An electronic data signal embodied in a data communications medium shared among a plurality of network devices comprising sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause one or more electronic systems to:~~

~~broadcast a discovery request to network devices~~ A data communications medium having electronic data signals stored therein, the medium to be shared among a plurality of network devices, wherein the electronic data signals comprise sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause one or more electronic systems to:

estimate a number of network devices from [[the]] responses received from the network devices;

divide [[the]] target devices into subsets of target devices, wherein a subset to which a particular device belongs is determined based on an identifier of the device and a number of subsets to which the target devices are divided;

send a second request;

limit subsets of target devices responsive to the second request, in part based on the second request including the number of subsets to which the target devices are divided and a subset index value;; and

vary a timing with which the second request is communicated to the subsets of target devices.

8. (Currently Amended) The data communications medium ~~electronic data signal~~

of claim 7 wherein the sequences of instructions that cause the one or more electronic systems to determine the subset of target devices further comprises sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the one or more electronic systems to:

broadcast over a network;

receive one or more responses from target devices coupled to the network;

estimate a number of devices coupled to the network; and

determine a number of subgroups based, at least in part, on the estimated number of devices coupled to the network.

9. (Currently Amended) The data communications medium ~~electronic data signal~~ of claim 7 wherein the sequences of instructions that cause the one or more electronic systems to determine the subset of target devices further comprises sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the one or more electronic systems to:

multicast to a subset of a network;

receive one or more responses from target devices of the subnet;

estimate a number of devices in the subnet; and

determine a number of subgroups based, at least in part, on the estimated number of devices in the subnet.

10. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

broadcasting a discovery request to network devices;

estimating a number of network devices from [[the]] responses received from the network devices;

dividing a set of target devices into multiple subsets of target devices, wherein the subset to which a particular device belongs is determined based on an identifier of the device;

limiting subsets of target devices responsive to the second request, in part based on the second request including the number of subsets to which the target devices are divided and a subset index value;

sending a second request; and

varying a timing with which the subsets of devices respond to the second request.

11. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10 wherein determining the subset of target devices comprises:

broadcasting over a network;

receiving one or more responses from target devices coupled to the network;

estimating a number of devices coupled to the network; and

determining a number of subgroups based, at least in part, on the estimated number of devices coupled to the network.

12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10 wherein determining the subset of target devices comprises:

multicasting to a subset of a network;

receiving one or more responses from target devices of the subnet;

estimating a number of devices in the subnet; and

determining a number of subgroups based, at least in part, on the estimated

number of devices in the subnet.

13. (Currently Amended) An article comprising a machine-accessible medium to provide machine-readable instructions that, when executed, cause one or more electronic system to:

broadcast a discovery request to network devices;

estimate a number of network devices from [[the]] responses received from the network devices;

divide a set of target devices into multiple subsets of target devices, wherein a subset to which a particular device belongs is determined based on an identifier of the device;

limit subsets of target devices responsive to the second request, in part based on the second request including the number of subsets to which the target devices are divided and a subset index value;

send a second request; and

vary a timing with which the subsets of devices respond to the second request.

14. (Previously Presented) The article of claim 13 wherein the instructions

that cause the one or more electronic systems to determine the subset of target devices further comprises sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the one or more electronic systems to:

broadcast over a network;

receive one or more responses from target devices coupled to the network;

estimate a number of devices coupled to the network; and

determine a number of subgroups based, at least in part, on the estimated number of devices coupled to the network.

15. (Previously Presented) The article of claim 13 wherein the instructions

that cause the one or more electronic systems to determine the subset of target devices further comprises sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the one or more electronic systems to:

multicast to a subset of a network;

receive one or more responses from target devices of the subnet;

estimate a number of devices in the subnet; and

determine a number of subgroups based, at least in part, on the estimated number of devices in the subnet.

16. (Currently Amended) ~~An electronic data signal embodied in a data communications medium shared among a plurality of network devices comprising sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause one or more electronic systems to~~A tangible machine-accessible medium having electronic data signals stored therein, the medium to be shared among a plurality of network devices, wherein the electronic data signals comprise sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause one or more electronic systems to:

broadcast a discovery request to network devices;

estimate a number of network devices from [[the]] responses received from the network devices;

divide a set of target devices into multiple subsets of target devices, wherein the subset to which a particular device belongs is determined based on an identifier of the device;

send a second request; and

limit subsets of target devices responsive to the second request, in part based on the second request including the number of subsets to which the target devices are divided and a subset index value; and

vary a timing with which the subsets of devices respond to the second request.

17. (Currently Amended) The tangible machine-accessible medium ~~electronic data signal~~ of claim 16 wherein the sequences of instructions that cause the one or more electronic systems to determine the subset of target devices further comprises sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the one or more electronic systems to:

broadcast over a network;

receive one or more responses from target devices coupled to the network;

estimate a number of devices coupled to the network; and

determine a number of subgroups based, at least in part, on the estimated number of devices coupled to the network.

18. (Currently Amended) The tangible machine-accessible medium ~~electronic data signal~~ of claim 16 wherein the sequences of instructions that cause the one or more

electronic systems to determine the subset of target devices further comprises sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the one or more electronic systems to:

multicast to a subset of a network;

receive one or more responses to from target devices of the subnet;

estimate a number of devices in the subnet; and

determine a number of subgroups based, at least in part, on the estimated number of devices in the subnet.

19. (Withdrawn) A method comprising:

receiving a message via a network, the network coupled to a group of devices, the message having a bins value indicating a number of subgroups to divide the network devices into and a hash value indicating a specific subgroup of the number of subgroups to which the message is targeted;

performing a hashing function with a unique identifier and the bins value to generate a hash result; and

responding to the message if the hash result equals the hash value.

20. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 19 wherein the message is a discovery request message.

21. (Withdrawn) An article comprising a machine-accessible medium to provide machine-readable instructions that, when executed, cause one or more electronic systems to:

receive a message via a network, the network coupled to a group of devices, the

message having a bins value indicating a number of subgroups to divide the network devices into and a hash value indicating a specific subgroup of the number of subgroups to which the message is targeted;

perform a hashing function with a unique identifier and the bins value to generate a hash result; and

respond to the message if the hash result equals the hash value.

22. (Withdrawn) The article of claim 21 wherein the message is a discovery request message.

23. (Withdrawn) An electronic data signal embodied in a data communications medium shared among a plurality of network devices comprising sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause one or more electronic systems to:

receive a message via a network, the network coupled to a group of devices, the message having a bins value indicating a number of subgroups to divide the network devices into and a hash value indicating a specific subgroup of the number of subgroups to which the message is targeted;

perform a hashing function with a unique identifier and the bins value to generate a hash result; and

respond to the message if the hash result equals the hash value.

24. (Withdrawn) The electronic data signal of claim 23 wherein the message is a discovery request message.